

# Sheriff

Keep courthouses safe, move prisoners, and in some provinces patrol the highways. A peace officer job with paid training.

## TYPICAL PAY

**\$70,000**

a year, full time

## PAY RANGE

**\$45k to \$87k**

starting to experienced

## TIME TO QUALIFY

**1 to 3 years**

after high school

## DEMAND

**Moderate**

job outlook

## LICENCE NEEDED

**Yes**

regulated job

## WHERE YOU WORK

**Courthouses, prisoner transport, highways, legislature security**

## How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12  
 The minimum in most provinces. Alberta's court security stream asks for a 2-year diploma or a degree, or 2 years of related experience.
- 2 Meet the requirements** Before applying  
 18 or older, Canadian citizen or permanent resident, valid driver's licence, first aid and CPR, clean record, and pass a fitness test (PARE, the Physical Abilities Requirement Evaluation, in Alberta).
- 3 Selection** 3 to 12 months  
 Written test, interview, psychological assessment, medical, background check. Competitions open when the province is hiring, so timing matters.
- 4 Academy** 10 to 15 weeks  
 Alberta: 15 weeks at the government training academy in Edmonton. BC: the Justice Institute of British Columbia. Nova Scotia and other provinces run their own courses.
- 5 Field training** 6 to 12 months  
 Paired with a senior sheriff. Alberta's field program is 9 months.

## Pros and cons

- + Paid training, no degree needed
- + Government pension and union protection
- + Peace officer status and a clear ladder
- Shift work, early starts and weekends
- Long hours standing or driving
- Real risk: you handle people on their worst day

## Good to know

### Alberta has five sheriff branches

Alberta Sheriffs cover courts and security, highway patrol, fish and wildlife enforcement, protection and investigation, and operational support. The service has grown well beyond the courthouse in recent...

### The word is older than the country

Sheriff comes from the English 'shire reeve', the king's officer in a county. Canada kept the title for court officers, while in the US it became an elected county police chief.

## Optional boosts

Highway patrol (Alberta). Protection and investigation. Fish and wildlife enforcement (Alberta). Supervisor and training roles.

### Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Sheriffs, wages (updated Nov 2025)  
 Alberta: Sheriff careers (requirements, training)  
 alis (Alberta): Sheriff occupation profile  
 Job Bank: Sheriffs and bailiffs, requirements and certification

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in Canadian dollars, based on Government of Canada Job Bank wage data and published salary grids. They vary by province, employer and experience. Tuition is for domestic students. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/ca/careers/sheriff>



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